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Obſervations

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ON

FARMING,

Extracted ſrom different

AUTHORS,

And publiſhed for the

BENEFIT OF HIS TENANTS.

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BRITISH MUSEUM

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OBSERVATIONS
ON
FARMING.

THE raiſing Manure in Farm-yards is at a very low Pitch throughout moſt Parts of the Northern Counties. This Manure, with good Management, is the beſt and cheapeſt a Man can uſe.

Three Circumſtances occaſion this Defect, ſo very fatal to Huſbandry.

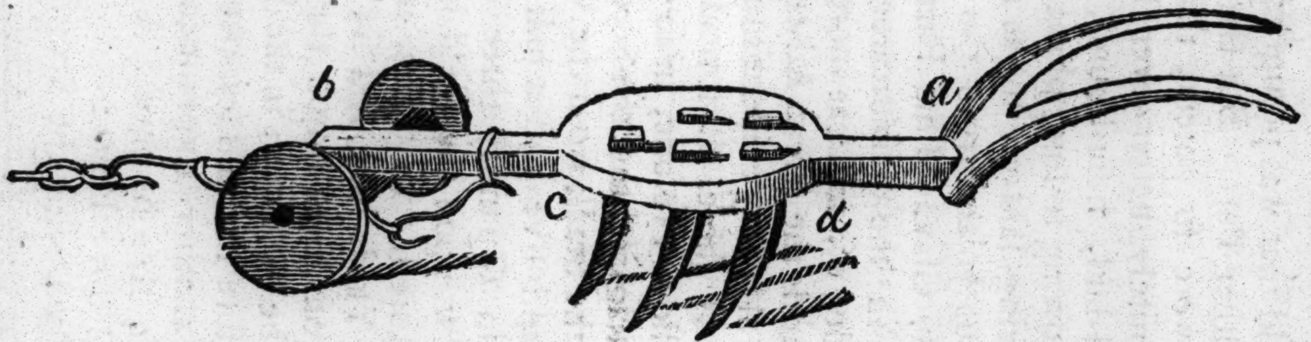
I. The Want of well-incloſed Farm-yards, called in the North Fold-yards.

II. The feeding the Hay about the Fields. This execrable Practice is productive of nothing but Miſchief. The Paſtures are poached all Winter; and the Dung ariſing from many Herds of Cattle loſt; for a thin Scattering about the Fields is worthleſs.

III. The not chopping their Wheat Stubbles for littering their Yards. Left in the Field it is quite uſeleſs as a Manure, from Want of Quantity and Fermentation; and it choaks the Plough in Breaking-up. But when it is carried into the Farm-yard, to receive all the Dung and Urine of the Cattle that eat the Straw and Hay, it is converted into vaſt Quantities of rich Manure.

The Earl of Darlington, only by Means of Stacking his Hay at his Farm-yard, makes more Dung in one Year, than the Common Farmers, on the ſame Track of Land, in ten. The Dependance on Lime is every where too great, and the Neglect of Farm-yard Dung univerſal. The Latter is of ſuch Importance in Agriculture, that too much Attention cannot be given to it. In the Winter of 1758, the late Mr. Scroope, of Danby, formed a very large Compoſt Hill: Firſt, a Layer was made of Farm-yard Dung; next, one upon that of Virgin Earth; a third of Lime; the fourth of Virgin Earth; the fifth of Dung; the ſixth, Virgin Earth; and the ſeventh of Lime. In theſe Compoſts, Mr. Scroope made it a Rule never to lay Lime and Dung together, on Account of burning; but threw the Lime between two Layers of Earth. In the following Summer, this Hill was turned over twice, and well mixed together. In the Winter of 1759, it was again well turned over. March 9, &c. 1760, it was uſed upon a Paſture, to the Amount of 296 Loads, 60 were laid per Acre. Part of the Field was ploughed with an Inſtrument, which Mr. Scroope found very ſerviceable, A FIVE-COULTERED SCARIFICATOR.

A MODEL OF THE SCARIFICATOR.



From *a* to *b* 6 Feet 6 Inches, *c* to *d* 2 Feet 6 Inches, *e* to *f* 4 Feet.

The Oval Coulter Board 15 Inches broad.

The Coulters 3 Inches from each other; 2 Feet 3 Inches long, and 4 Inches wide.

The Axletree 22 Inches long, the Wheels 18 Inches Diameter.

That Part of the Field that was ploughed was much better than the other Part. But the Virtues of the Manure were ſo potent, that the Whole has been infinitely better ever ſince. This Paſture was ill-laid, hide-bound, and moſſy, ſuppoſed to be owing to long ploughing, and ſo much Lime being laid on it, as to attract all the oleaginous Juices from the Soil, which is a cold gravelly Clay. That Part of it that was ploughed with the Scarificator, the Cattle were much fonder of, and eat more bare than the other Part; and the great Advantage of the Scarificator was alſo very evident in mowing in 1761, as it was there all ſpread with White Clover and Yellow Trefoile, in ſo much that the Neighbours imagined that the Seeds had been ſown. In 1761, the Stack from the Whole was 15 Yards long, and five and a half wide, and well carried up; in Quantity three Times as much as ever grew upon the Field before. In 1762, it was paſtured. In 1763, mowed again; the Stack 12 Yards long and ſix wide; the ſcarificated Part continued much the beſt; the Crop ſuppoſed to be 24 Tons; in the Whole 17 Acres. It was before lett at 10 s. per Acre. In February 1760, another Experiment was tried on manuring in this Method: A Graſs Field was divided into three Parts:

No. 1. Was ploughed with the Scarificator, and then manured with Soap Aſhes.

No. 2. Manured with Soap Aſhes, and then ploughed with the Scarificator.
3. Manured with Soap Aſhes, and not ploughed at all.

In 1761, No. 1. Was much the beſt.
2. The next.
3. The worſt.

The Marquis of Rockingham's Kentiſh Farmer's Management of his Manure is much better than is common in Yorkſhire; he carries it out of the Farm-yard, lays it under the Hedges, and then digs up all the Hillocks, and riſing irregular Banks of Earth, and mixes them well with the Dung. This Practice, which is common in Eſſex, is unknown among the Farmers in Yorkſhire. Of this Compoſt he lays 50 Loads 18 Buſhels per Acre. His Lime he mixes in the ſame Manner with Earth, one Chaldron of Lime to 30 Loads of Earth.

The Author of Miſcellaneous Diſſertations on Rural Subjects, ſays, “Where a Variety of Materials can be had, they may be laid as follows: Firſt, Clay or ſtrong Earth, next Soap Aſhes, Dung, Loamy Earth, Lime, Tanner's Bark, Green Vegetables before they run to Seed, Earth, Soap Aſhes, Dung, Tanner's Bark, Earth; alſo Fat Chalk, Sea Weeds, Sea Sand, which may be ſo mixt, as not only to raiſe a general Fermentation throughout the whole Compoſt, but likewiſe to ſuit the Nature of the Land on which it is intended to be laid. The common Way is to lay the ſeveral Materials in Layers, one over the other, 'till a large Heap is raiſed; and to make theſe Layers from ſix Inches to a Foot in Thickneſs: But this I have found by Experience is entirely wrong. For the Fermentation raiſed in the Compoſt, is not ſtrong enough to penetrate theſe thick Layers, eſpecially thoſe of Clay or ſtrong Earth; for after the reſt have ſufficiently fermented, and the Compoſt is turned, theſe Layers riſe Whole almoſt as when firſt layed, and muſt be broke by the Hand, to mix them with the reſt of the Compoſt; whence ariſe two Inconveniences, one an extraordinary Expence of Labour, and the other that twice or thrice turning is ſometimes neceſſary to diſſolve theſe large Pieces; and as a new Fermentation is excited every Time the Compoſt is turned, the Strength of the Manure is greatly waſted, before it is laid upon the Land, where it is then incapable of raiſing any conſiderable Fermentation, which is one of the Principal Uſes of Manure. The beſt Way therefore of making Compoſt, is not in thick Layers; but after the Ground is marked out for the Compoſt, the ſeveral Materials, after being well broken, ſhould be laid in Heaps round the Space marked out for the Compoſt Heap, and a Man placed between each two Heaps, to throw the Manure, ſpreading upon that Space;

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in this Manner the Compoſt Heap will ſoon be raiſed to the intended Height; and the ſeveral Sorts of Manure being thus well mixed, the Whole will ſoon begin to ferment, and will incorporate as fully in two Months, as the ſame Manures placed in Layers in the uſual Way will in four or five. The Owner, therefore, in making ſuch Compoſts, ſhould not prepare them too long before they are to be laid upon the Land, otherwiſe they will be much waſted, and their beſt Parts evaporated. Compoſts prepared in this Manner need not be turned, or at moſt above once. If the Fermentation is obſerved to abate too ſoon, make Holes with a Pole from the Top almoſt to the Bottom of the Heap, upon which throw Urine or the Running of a Dung-Hill, which will fill the Holes, force through the whole Subſtance of the Compoſt, and ſoon compleat the Fermentation. Such a Compoſt is excellent for Meadow or Paſture Grounds. The beſt Way to improve theſe, is to cut them about five or ſix Inches deep with the Five-coultered Scarificator, which cuts the Surface in Slips about three Inches aſunder, but does not raiſe or turn them. This Cutting of the Roots of the Graſs, and the Manure laid on at the ſame Time ſinking into theſe Inciſions made by the Coulters, cauſes a ſurpriſing Improvement in the Quality of the Herbage, and alſo makes ſuch Graſs Grounds produce three

Times

Times the Quantity they did before. The beſt Situation for a Compoſt, is upon level Ground; or if made upon a Deſcent, a Trench ſhould be cut on the lower Side to receive the Running of the Heap, which is ſome of the beſt Part of it, and ſhould from Time to Time be thrown up again, which will quicken the Fermentation. The richeſt Compoſts may be made in the Farm-yard, which ſhould be made deepening all round, from the Sides to the Middle, in the Form of a hollow Diſh or Baſon. When the Yard is made up in this Form, none of the Urine or Liquid Part of the Manure can run off or be waſted. When the Dung is carried from the Stables, Cow-houſes, &c. into the Farm-yard, they ſhould not be thrown careleſsly in Heaps, each Sort by itſelf, but carried in Carts or Wheel-barrows, and laid regularly and ſpread all over the Yard; upon this ſhould be ſpread a thin Layer of Earth, Mud, the Scowerings of Ditches and Ponds, Green Vegetables before they run to Seed, and other ſuch Materials as are moſt ſuitable to the Nature of the Land to be manured with them. The Racks and Cribs, out of which the Cattle are foddered, ſhould be frequently moved over the Yard, that the offal Straw and Hay may be equally diſperſed and trod in by the Cattle. The Whole will be incorporated with the Urine of the Cattle, and make an extraordinary rich Compoſt.

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The only Inconvenience of this Kind of Compoſt, is its being filled with the Seeds of Weeds from the Earths mixed with it, and the Hay, Straw, and Dung of the Cattle; and is therefore a Manure beſt ſuited to Graſs Grounds, and to ſuch Arable Lands as are to carry Crops to be hoed; as Turnips, Cabbages, Carrots, Potatoes, Beans, &c. as theſe Weeds will in great Meaſure be deſtroyed by good hoeing." The Manner in which I propoſe to cultivate an Intake from Buſby Wood, of 5 Acres 3 Roods, which I have juſt taken into my own Hands; and which I before lett at 3 l. 10 s. per Annum, the upper and courſer Part at 10 s. per Acre, the Remainder at 15 s. is as follows, November 15, 1794, at this Time two Men are draining it, who aſſure me they can make it perfectly dry. If it pleaſe God I live till Spring, I propoſe to have it pared and burnt; the Aſhes well mixt with Lime, and ſown with Turnips in Part, the Remainder planted with Potatoes. Afterwards Wheat. After the Wheat is reaped, about Michaelmas, to take the Opportunity of a very dry Day, and moderately windy, to ſet Fire to the Stubble, in ſo many Places as may ſerve to carry the Flames over the whole Surface of the Ground; as I hope the Aſhes, and the Warmth of the Fire, will be of much Advantage to the Soil. When this is done, to plough up the Land in Ridges, and prepare it thoroughly well in the

Spring,

Spring, for a Crop of Barley and Seeds: Six Buſhels of clean Hay Seeds, 12 lb. of White Clover, 8 lb. of Trefoile and Ribgraſs per Acre. After the Barley is reaped, 6 lb. more of Clover Seed ſown over the Stubble, which then to be mown and raked off, and conſequently the Seed pretty well burried in the Ground; as rich a Compoſt as I can, in the mean-time, procure ſhould immediately be ſpread on the Field, and well harrowed in, by which Means the Seed is completely covered; in this Manner to be left the firſt Winter. The Crops the next Year to be left 'till the Seeds are ripe enough to ſhake in the Mowing and Making, by which Means the Land gains a freſh Sprinkling, and the whole Surface inſured a total and thick Covering.

In the Year 1774, I tried Mr. Arthur Young's Method of planting Potatoes, with very great Succeſs; which was as follows, Firſt plough the Land fine, in Beds about five Feet broad, then ſpread your Dung; if the Land is inclinable to Stiffneſs, long Dung, old Thatch, Stubble, or any Thing of that Kind; upon the Manure lay the Potatoe Slices promiſcuouſly, about a Foot a ſunder; cover them three Inches deep, with the Earth dug out of the Furrows; a Trench in each like a Water Furrow, about 18 Inches wide. When the Potatoes are about four or five Inches high, Weed them, dig another Spit in the Trenches, and cover the Beds and Plants two Inches deeper; this will ſtop the Growth of moſt Weeds; but if any ariſe draw them out, but never Hand-hoe unleſs the Surface binds, which on proper Soils it will not do.

I likewiſe tried, in 1774, the Method of the Rev. Mr. Hall, of Swaith, near Barnſley, of tranſplanting old Hedges. In the Auguſt following, I found very fine Shoots from them, and at this preſent Time (20 Years after) they continue to be the fineſt Part of the Hedge. His Method is this: He tranſplants White Thorn Hedges of any Growth, even to 30 or 40 Years old. In Winter he grubs up the old Hedge, after cutting, in the common Manner, and without giving any unuſual Attention to the Manner in which it is done. The Stubs are not at all tender or liable to fail of growing: He has known them left out of the Ground a Week without any Damage; and, if there is a little Water at the bottom of the Ditch, he apprehends they would lie there ſafely a Month; but the beſt Way, undoubtedly, in ſuch Caſes, is to move it from one Hedge to the other as ſoon as convenient. The Bank or Place where the new Hedge is to be made, ſhould be marked out with a Line, and a proper Trench cut to ſet the Stubs in: They ſhould be burried rather deeper than they were in the Earth before. Mr. Hall has found that not one Stub in a hundred will fail of growing, and the Shoots are ſo vigorous,

gorous, that a new Hedge is ſormed much quicker than in any other Method. A very long Hedge was tranſplanted ſix Years ago, when 30 Years old; in five Years it ſprouted 14 Feet; it was then cut and plaſhed, and is now as thriving and fine a Hedge as can be ſeen. This Diſcovery is very important, for I have more than once known old Hedges grubbed up and levelled, and new ones planted; by which Conduct, above 10 Years are loſt in Height, and as many more in Strength. In the Grubbing up of old Hedges, it is very uſeful to know that the White Thorn Stubs may be preſerved to plant in other Hedges.

On the MANAGEMENT *of* CLOVER.

THE greateſt Benefit from Clover may be obtained, by cutting it green, as often as it attains a ſufficient Growth, and carrying it into Stables and Yards to be eaten by different Cattle, out of Racks and Cribs. In this Manner, it will certainly ſupport more than twice the Stock it would do, if fed off upon the Ground where it grew; beſides the additional Quantity of Manure that will by this Method be made in the ſaid Stables and Yards; if the ſame are kept littered with any Sort of Straw, or even Ruſhes or Fern. Which Increaſe of Manure will compenſate the Farmer for his Expence in cutting, and bringing the Clover into the Yards. I have known this Method uſed in many Parts of England to very great Advantage, and I apprehend the great Difference may be accounted for as follows: The quick growth of this Graſs after mowing, ſhades the Ground, and prevents the Sun from exhaling the Moiſture of the Land, ſo much as it would if fed bare; conſequently it continues to ſpring with more Vigour; and the Moment one Crop is off another begins to ſhoot up. Whereas when Cattle feed it, they frequently deſtroy as much as they eat, and beſides bruiſe the Necks of the Roots with their Feet, which prevents the Clover from ſpringing ſo freely as it does after a clean Cut by the Scythe. In hot Weather, which is the common Seaſon for feeding Clover, the Flies are generally ſo troubleſome to the Cattle, that they are continually running from Hedge to Hedge to bruſh them off; by which it is inconceivable what Injury they do to the Crop. But when they are fed in Stables and Yards, they are more in the Shade, they thrive better, and at the ſame Time conſume the Whole of what is given them without Waſte It is greatly for the Farmer's Intereſt to manure the Clover.

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